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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 14 October 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I write to alert you to the critical situation and continuously rising tensions in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, as a result of Israel's relentless illegal policy and oppressive actions against the Palestinian people. On a daily basis, the occupying Power persists with its grave violations of international law, including rampant settlement activities, the dispossession of Palestinian civilians, violent military raids, including into schools, daily detentions and arrests of Palestinians, constant provocations, including incitement at holy sites and the destruction of Palestinian property by extremist Israeli settlers, and the illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip. All of these violations are exacerbating already volatile conditions and heightening tensions, which threaten to completely destabilize the situation on the ground.

I first wish to draw your attention to Israel's incitement and provocations against holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem, namely at Al-Haram Al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary, which houses the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Qubbat Al-Sakhra (Dome of the Rock). In yet another dangerous development, yesterday, 13 October, the right-wing Deputy Speaker of the Israeli Knesset and member of the party of the Prime Minister, Moshe Feiglin, protected by hundreds of Israeli occupying forces, entered Al-Aqsa Mosque yet again, which led to violent clashes, with innocent Palestinian worshippers injured by stun grenades and rubber-coated bullets. It should be noted that Feiglin is a controversial figure, whose provocative and racist words and actions against the Palestinian people have been the source of repeated incitement. He is well known for his advocacy for Palestinian displacement and hate-filled speeches openly made against Palestinians and Arabs as a whole.

It should be mentioned that this latest provocation comes on the heels of clashes that occurred last week, when Israeli forces stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque and forcibly removed worshipers, attacking some of them with clubs, and firing tear gas,

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stun grenades and rubber bullets. Some of the stun grenades were fired into Al-Aqsa Mosque itself, causing a fire to break out and damage to the holy site. Moreover, the occupying Power even locked Palestinian worshipers in Al-Aqsa Mosque, preventing them from leaving. It is transparent, as was stated by Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, that Israel is attempting to create a new reality at the expense of the Palestinians, their religious rights, sites and historical identity and are violating the sanctity of religious sites without consequence.

We reiterate the dangers of such continuous provocations and incitement in or near Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first *qibla* and the third holiest site of Islam. Further provocations will only inflame tensions that are already high and anger among the Palestinian people and beyond, with dangerous ramifications. In this regard, we underscore the importance of a clear message of condemnation and rejection of such violations and provocations, such as yours made recently that you are "deeply concerned by repeated provocations at the holy sites in Jerusalem" and that "these only inflame tensions and must stop". It should be also noted that the occupying Power is carrying out the same illegal actions in relation to Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Al-Khalil (Hebron), where worshipers are continuously prevented from praying inside by Israeli occupying forces and settlers.

Accordingly, all such acts of incitement against the holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as acts of provocation against the Palestinian people by the occupying Power, whether by the Government of Israel, its occupying forces or its illegal settlers, warrant the serious and immediate attention of the international community, including the Security Council, in line with its primary Charter duty of the maintenance of international peace and security, and in line with its numerous relevant resolutions calling for a cessation of all Israeli measures aimed at altering the character, the legal status and the demography of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

In this regard, serious attention must be given to the continuing rampages of terror being perpetrated by Israeli settlers, persisting with attacks on Palestinian civilians, the destruction of property and the theft of land and natural resources. Yesterday, 13 October, several Palestinians were injured when clashes broke out as more than 300 Israeli settlers, escorted by hundreds of Israeli occupying forces, broke into the holy site of Joseph's tomb in Nablus to perform religious rituals. One Palestinian was shot and injured and many others were seriously hurt, including a 16-year-old boy. In addition, on 9 October, Israeli settlers uprooted and destroyed dozens of Palestinian olive trees near the village of Hosan, west of Bethlehem. Settler lawlessness and the failure of the Israeli Government to rein them in and hold them accountable for their crimes starkly reflects Israel's complete disinterest in peace based on the two-State solution. I also wish to bring to your attention the fact that the occupying Power continues with its inhumane and illegal policy of evicting Palestinian families. Last week, the occupying Power served eviction orders to 20 families living in Al-Burj and Al-Ras Al-Ahmar in the northern Jordan Valley.

I would like to turn your attention to the humanitarian disaster that still exists in the occupied Gaza Strip following the more than 50-day criminal Israeli military aggression, which wrought massive human devastation and physical destruction in all areas. In this regard, we welcome the successful convening and conclusion of the

international conference on the reconstruction of Gaza, hosted by Egypt and Norway in Cairo, and express our hope that the generous donations pledged will be rapidly disbursed for the urgently needed reconstruction to commence under the supervision of the Palestinian National Consensus Government in collaboration with the United Nations. We also continue to reiterate our calls for the full lifting of the Israeli blockade for reconstruction and rehabilitation without delay and for the Palestinian people in Gaza to truly begin to rebuild their lives and communities.

Given the above, we call on the international community, including the Security Council, to give immediate attention to the rising tensions and the critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Serious efforts must be made to demand and ensure Israel's compliance with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and the will of the international community before the situation further deteriorates. To remain silent in the face of such gross violations is unacceptable and will only bolster Israel's impunity and send the wrong message to the occupying Power — that it can continue to flout international law as it wishes without consequence. The time has to come to bring an end to Israel's occupation of almost five decades and to all of its crimes against the unprotected Palestinian civilian population and their land.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 523 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 2 October 2014 (A/ES-10/659-S/2014/716), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
of the State of Palestine to the United Nations